

Indiana Board of Interpreter Standards

February 4, 2009 -- 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Welcome & Introductions – Attendance: Amanda Mueller, Carrie Westhoelter, Roger Norrod, Richard Noel, Karen Horvath, Rebecca Buchan, Deka Oliver, Rhonda Marcum, Bob Canty, Tom Rigsbee, Garth Sponseller, Charleen Sculley, MJ Herrema Olson, Arden Weigand.
Interpreters: Lynn Frye and Charlotte Winston

Called to Order - Amanda called the meeting to order at 10:00.

Ground Rules

Choosing a language
Working with interpreters
Mutual Respect

Minutes – Need to approve the minutes from BIS meeting on January 13, 2009

Motion – 02.09.001 – Amanda Mueller moved, Rebecca Buchan seconded.

Move to approve the January 13, 2009 Minutes as corrected.

OLD Business

BIS History

Article 7 – Indiana's version of the IDEA which outlines the accommodations for children that receive special education. Indiana requires a "certified" interpreter; the ADA only says "qualified" interpreters.

Indiana Code 12.75 – Recommended by the BIS that all educational interpreters in Indiana must achieve state certification. This is for educational interpreters only. FSSA is mandating this without much authority within the schools to enforce. DOE has the ability to enforce such standards.

ICASE – Involved in original BIS standards and requested that the 2007 deadline be extended to 2010.

Educational Interpreter Task Force – Originally, there was a subcommittee of the BIS named Educational Interpreter subcommittee. The term task force may have been used but this is not the same as the current Educational Interpreter Task Force. The subcommittee are the ones that came up with the IIC and the EIC. Once their work was done the task force dissolved. However, once the BIS folded, a new independent committee was formed, the EI Task Force. The new task force is comprised of different representatives such as: ISD, ICASE, LEAs, parents, educators, and interpreters.

IN-SITE Standards (handout) – recommended by the "new" Educational Task Force; their work over the last several years. ED. Task Force is funded by DOE and DHHS.

Dr. David Geeslin attended part of the BIS board meeting to discuss the history of the BIS (he is a previous chair) and the work they did with DOE and ICASE to create the educational interpreter standards. The EI Task Force at that time included Deka Oliver, Myron Yoder, Ann Reifel, Judy Cain, Angela Myers and a few others who helped define the training for educational interpreters (even though we already had Indiana standards). It was decided to adopt the national RID EIPA and other criteria added (see IN-SITES handout).

When complaints against an educational interpreter are sent to DHHS or FSSA, how school corporations have to address it and how it is filed is weaker than if the DOE is in charge of educational interpreters. If the DOE is overseeing educational interpreter standards any complaint or grievance received by DOE must be documented which may later be seen by federal auditors. This ultimately means that school corporations will be held accountable by the Federal IDEA. Presently, Bob Marra has invested a lot of his time, and staff time, in developing the IN-SITE and he has supports it.

An area to focus our attention and energy is now the sub committee that will be appointed to review the IN-SITE every five years. Will they feel this document is too strict and attempt to "water it down"? SUGGESTION: Develop an MOU for the BIS to offer recommendations that identify who is appointed to that sub committee (ISD, parents, deaf educators, certified interpreters, etc.)

NEW Business

Senate Bill 57

SB 57 passed out of committee and is currently on the Senate floor. It should move to the house floor later this month.

Amanda's Update from hearing 1/28/08 - Amanda talked with Dr. Bob Marra and he said he is in favor of educational interpreters having minimum qualifications. He is also in favor of educational interpreters having specialized training in the subject areas they interpret.

The BIS sees the strengths and pros of SB 57 and at this time is only concerned that the current language in the bill is weak because it does not confirm the standards to be used nor does it speak to the qualifications of those that will develop, approve, and review these standards. However, after talking with many of the senators, Dr. Marra, and others involved in the writing of the bill, it would seem that this bill could be beneficial to deaf and hard of hearing children in many ways with the right people working together.

Originally the BIS was concerned with the 18 appointed members of the governor's committee. However, after looking in to the matter, this is the group that oversees all licensing and will provide the official "rubber stamp" but will not do the work of developing and reviewing. Instead, this work goes to a subcommittee that provides recommendations to the Professional Licensing Board (formerly the PSB) can be comprised of parents, professionals, EI Task Force and BIS.

Question: Do we, the BIS, want to monitor the standards for educational interpreters? DOE may be better equipped to do that. They have more "teeth." BIS is planning to meet with DOE, members of the Educational Interpreter TF, and other key players to foster more collaboration.

Question: Are interpreters penalized or fined for unethical practices.

No. However, if SB 57 passes, then DOE must investigate and act upon any complaints and will usually ask the interpreters to produce the required credentials or paperwork to maintain employment. This is a federal process and is on the record. Once a complaint is logged, the result is to change the behavior by providing professional development and training. This will not happen overnight, and may be a challenge for DOE.

Other discussions:

DOE has money within its budget to fund educational programs for children. Teachers and their professional development can directly affect the outcomes of children's educational progress. Likewise, interpreters have a major impact on children's educational progress. It may be more beneficial to tap into DOE for that reason.

Regular evaluations/assessment of Educational Interpreters: BIS would strongly recommend the need for qualified people going into the classroom to assess skills on an ongoing basis similar to teachers and their annual performance appraisal.

BIS - Board meetings

Minutes for meetings – Secretary will compile minutes and distribute to the Board for approval in one week or less. Once corrected and approved, our goal is to have the minutes submitted to DHHS within two weeks to be posted on the website within four weeks of the BIS meeting date.

Roberts Rules of Order – Rebecca will research the cost of a Parliamentarian for a Town Hall meeting or other public meetings of a sensitive nature, and submit a request for funds to Rhonda Marcum at DHHS.

Interpreter requests – Interpreters must be requested five days in advance through the state. Interpreters must also be directly contracted with the State. Instead of the BIS Secretary having the responsibility of acquiring the interpreters, Amanda asked if DHHS could handle arranging interpreters for future meetings. Debra agreed, and stated she will also change the point of contact for requesting an interpreter on the website.

Executive Sessions – Amanda will re-read the law and see if the BIS is allowed to have executive sessions. DHHS recently met with the FSSA Attorney yesterday, and she brought to light many things the BIS can and cannot do. Amanda will be sending an email about some of those findings.

BIS - Moving forward

Chair position – The law states that the Chair can only serve a two year term as "Chair". However, it was clarified that Amanda will serve two years as chair but is allowed by law to retain a three year term so that she can mentor the new Chair during her third year on the Board.

Member replacement – How do we measure inactive board members? DHHS has the authority to remove any board members. The BIS can write a recommendation to DHHS and ask for removal of a Board member. If anyone has a problem internally with another Board member, please address that person directly first. If the issue cannot be resolved, please document and meet with the Chair to address issue. If the Chair is the problem, address the issue with Rhonda Marcum at DHHS. If someone resigns from the Board, DHHS will go back to the previous BIS Selection Committee and review applications to find a replacement.

Code of Ethics –

Motion – 02.08.002. Motion made by Amanda Mueller, seconded by Karen Horvath

Move to accept the new NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct Tenants 1-7, to replace the current BIS Code of Ethics 1-7, and keep #8 and #9 in the original version.

Motion – 02.08.003. Motion made by Amanda Mueller, seconded by Richard Noel

Move to amend the wording in #8 to read “Information on best practices in the interpreting field will be provided if necessary.”

Grievances against interpreters

Grievance committee – Is it the role of the BIS? Rhonda clarified that the role of the BIS is to compile information and make recommendations to FSSA. It is imperative that the BIS work closely with FSSA to ensure ongoing support.

Reporting system – New email addresses for the BIS: HYPERLINK "<mailto:bis@fssa.in.gov>" bis@fssa.in.gov. DHHS staff will check email addresses daily and forward to the BIS Board members.

Monitoring – Amanda suggested that we research other states with certification and licensure and present other models to FSSA. Rebecca mentioned that RID already has Practice (Position) Papers in place for interpreting in specialized settings. Roger expressed again that we need to monitor interpreters and their work to ensure that they are following Indiana Interpreting Standards and Best Practices.

Penalties – Hold until we have researched other states and RID Practice Papers.

BIS - Internal Communications

Last minute communications – Rebecca suggested that emails include “BIS: ____” in the subject heading to be easily identified separately from other email.

Last minute decisions – Carrie suggested video conferencing through ooVoo, VP or webcam. OoVoo can hold up to six live videos simultaneously (\$9.95/month). Roger and Richard strongly agree.

Next communication - Amanda wants to send a general letter to the community that the BIS is back and desires to work collaboratively with the entire community. She will draft the letter, send it to the BIS for feedback, and forward to DHHS for final approval and dissemination to the community. Amanda will also send the updated BIS Code of Ethics to FSSA with justification for changes for approval then disseminate to the community. Communication will be sent to DHHS for the website, email list of IIC/EIC interpreters, ICASE list, ICRID INSights article and ICRID website.

Future meetings – Next meeting will be Friday, March 20th at 12:00-4:00pm. The focus of this meeting will be to view interpreter standards/rules and regulations in other states.

Public Comments:

Garth Sponseller, Director of DeafLink in Fort Wayne – Really supports the IN-SITE and is glad to see something to be put in place. However is concerned with those that continue to hire interpreters without certification.

Question: How will the new revised BIS Code of Ethics be disseminated? Response: If approved, the new BIS Code of Ethics will be posted on the DHHS website and/or sent through DHHS IIC/EIC email list.

Garth also requested that we post the January meeting minutes and this meeting minutes on the website. Response: Minutes will be submitted to DHHS within two weeks of the meeting date and from there DHHS will post them within their timeframe, which is unknown but should not be too long.

Charlene Sculley, SW Intern from Gallaudet – Served on Illinois Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing sub committee in creating interpreter certification/licensure and standards. Thank you for allowing me to attend this meeting.

Tom Rigsbee, Deaf consumer – Concerned that many deaf are faced with unqualified interpreters at medical appointments. Also, some doctors do not want to hire an interpreter. Often, even if the doctor is willing to hire an interpreter, they may justify only needing interpreters for serious medical conditions, not for routine visits like an annual physical. My doctor asks me to use written communication. Response: This is outside of the jurisdiction of BIS and the best way to get doctors to listen is to use the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act.

Tom – Also concerned about a specific incident where two interpreters were sent to interpret a meeting for his company. One could not understand him and left. Tom asked, “How do I tolerate using interpreters that don’t understand me because of my handicap, CP?” Response: You can and should directly voice your complaint to the agency that sent the interpreters so that the problem is known. Other Deaf people present stated that they have a personal list of interpreters at agencies that they use and that this helps the agency meet their specific communication needs.

Announcements

Meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.

Next meeting:

Friday, March 20, 2009 – 12:00-4:00pm

Indiana Deaf School, Vocational Building - Paul Baldrige Room